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NEWS

Census: Washington Metro Area Is Now Larger Than Philadelphia Metro Area

WRITTEN BY BENJAMIN FREED | PUBLISHED ON MARCH 24, 2016



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The Washington metropolitan area has surpassed the Philadelphia area to become the sixth-most populous in the United States, according to figures published Thursday by the Census Bureau.

Greater Washington's population reached 6,097,684 in 2015, an increase of 63,793 over the previous year, the Census reports. Philadelphia's population, meanwhile, remained nearly flat, adding fewer than 17,000 people over the same period to reach just 6,069,875.

While Philadelphia proper remains much larger than the District, the Washington metro area's climb in the population rankings is in tune with what the area's own statisticians have forecasted about the region's growth. A presentation delivered on March 10 at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments projected that the area's population will hit nearly 7 million by 2045, and that DC itself will top 1 million. (It's currently estimated to be 672,228.)

Philadelphia's demographers, meanwhile, will have to sulk under the Rocky statue as their region continues to wane in the future. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* reports that while Philadelphia and its surrounding counties are showing strong immigration and birth rates, those figures are nearly offset but the number of people moving out. (One theory: They know Philadelphia just isn't as equipped as other places to host massive events like, say, a papal visit.)

Overall, New York remains the largest metropolitan area by far, followed by Los Angeles, Chicago, Dallas, and Houston. Atlanta and Miami ranked eighth and ninth, respectively, but are on pace to eclipse Philadelphia within five years if current population trends hold up.



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Benjamin Freed
Staff Writer

Benjamin Freed joined *Washingtonian* in August 2013 and covers politics, business, and media. He was previously the editor of DCist and has also written for Washington City Paper, the New York Times, the New Republic, Slate, and BuzzFeed. He lives in Adams Morgan.

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